

Eickholt, Brad

From: vickie@forestfla.org%inter2 [vickie@forestfla.org]
Sent: Friday, December 02, 2005 4:08 PM
To: FarmBill
Cc: alan@forestfla.org%inter2
Subject: Farm Bill Comments

Importance: High

Attachments: '07 Farm Bill Comments.doc



'07 Farm Bill
Comments.doc (10..

please see attachment.

Thanks,
Alan Shelby
Florida Forestry Association

December 1, 2005

Secretary Mike Johanns
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Farm Bill
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-3355

Re: 2007 Farm Bill

Dear Secretary Johanns:

Thank you for your willingness to travel the country and hear from the producers that will be impacted by the 2007 Farm Bill. We were among the participants at the forum you attended in Orlando, Florida this September. On behalf of the Florida Forestry Association and as a follow-up to the Orlando forum, I would like to submit the following comments and recommendations for inclusion in the upcoming Farm Bill.


As you know, urbanization, fragmentation and forest health problems are rapidly altering privately owned forests. In spite of the burdens of federal rules, regulations, and policies, private forest lands in this country have remained productive.

As the management of private forestland comes under greater environmental and regulatory pressures, it is imperative that the private forestland owner be aware of the tools available to cope with these complex issues of forestland use and management. The 2002 Farm Bill contained a separate Forestry Title for the first time in over a decade, and we recommend the same for 2007.

We would like to urge your consideration of the following concepts when crafting the 2007 Farm Bill:

- Focus on the priorities – Incentive programs should be goal oriented and not too broad. Individual examples may include forest health, water quality, wildlife habitat and loss of forest cover;
- Programs should be implemented on a regional basis or targeted area – Rather than operate on a first-come first-served basis, regionalized programs should be developed to show measurable public benefits;
- Engage the private sector – Develop policies and programs that encourage private partnerships. Utilize the expertise and financial resources of non-governmental organizations to achieve the desired goal;
- Support the continuation and increase funding for non-industrial forest landowner assistance and conservation programs;

Florida



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- Extend the required thinning time frame for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) forest lands; and remove language that conflicts with participation in the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP);
- Support the continuation and increase funding for programs that provide access to overseas markets for U.S. agriculture, including wood products; specifically the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program;
- Support the creation of a competitive grant program for the development of plant fuels, chemicals, and energy from biomass.

The Florida Forestry Association believes it is important for the government and private sectors to work together to insure that forest landowners are encouraged, not discouraged, by the proper policies and incentives to ensure a healthy and productive forest industry. In addition, we believe that a combination of research, extension, and outreach education programs will continue the success of the American family forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alan Shelby', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Alan Shelby
Florida Forestry Association